

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 7:00 PM

West Seneca Community Center – 1300 Union Rd., West Seneca

CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE

Evelyn Hicks (EH) Chair, Rick Rutkowski (RR) Vice-Chair, Mike Wass (MW), Cynnie Gaasch (CG), Tracy Skalski (TS)

Excused/Absent: Lauren Masset (LM), Emily Masset (EM)

Guest: Jeff Meredith

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Meeting Minutes – February 2021- approved by members
2. Financial Report – MW verifies that budget amounts are as follows:
 - 2020 WSEC Working Budget – \$1500.00
 - Town Environmental funds:
 - National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) - \$2,710.76
 - US Fish & Wildlife Service - \$29,000.00
 - National Grid Mitigation Fund - \$61,000.00

Discussion ensues re: providing more complete information for the public – EH and MW will draft a “white paper” for the public, RR suggests activities and projects of the Commission also be developed on a “white paper”, and both be posted to WS website.

3. Correspondence – Stantec Engineering Svcs is managing construction of a viewing platform at the Meyer Rd wetlands, & construction may begin in Spring 2021 – Jeff Meredith reports that removal of trash & debris has been done
4. 2015, 2018, 2019, 2020 Annual Reports – EH reports that she will send completed (draft) documents for 2019,2020 to members for review
5. Membership – 1 vacancy remains on WSEC

III. WSEC PROJECTS - UPDATES/DISCUSSION

1. Oxbow Wetlands (2805 Clinton St.) – RR reports of removing dead tree (planted by WSEC), seeing damage (i.e rutted tracks along berm, eroded soils, dead plants) caused by motor vehicle (i.e. ATV, pickup trucks) traffic, reiterates his request for posting of “no trespassing” signage, installation of barriers to prevent vehicle traffic from accessing the property, his desire to petition the WS Town Board to creation of W. Seneca Nature Sanctuary at site
2. Standing Subcommittee reports:
 - Tree Issues Subcommittee – MW is progressing with plans for ID of tree types, tree planting (suggested late Fall 2021) at Birchfield Nature and arts Center, Switzer Park, and 2805 Clinton St.
 - Creek Awareness Presentation - LM e-mailed members to advise that powerpoint presentation has been revised/updated RR, TS will work to upgrade Creek Awareness presentation by adding new information (video depicting of “hydraulics effect” at Buffalo Creek spillway)
 - Education Subcommittee:
 - Environmental Corner (Town website) – EH provides TS with contact person at Town so that new information can be added
 - Social media – LM created a Virtual Earth Day Event and Scavenger Hunt – EM & TS posted same on Instagram & Facebook
 - Water Quality Issues Subcommittee:

- Buffalo Creek Canoe/Kayak Launch – 880 Harlem Rd. – RR reports that M. Todd (NYSDEC) advised that no monies are available in their program for launch site upgrades in 2021.
 - Residential Rain Barrels – no activity
 - Municipal Rain Barrels – no activity
 - Storm Drain Marking – “permission” letter for activity rec’d. from Town
3. New Grant opportunities – none (since last meeting)

IV. TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1. 2885 Clinton St – (expansion of recreational area by Canisius High School) – EH advises that area that is targeted for development is behind (to the south of) the existing playing fields

V. ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC

1. Deer Issues – RR sent ltr to G. Dickson advocating education of the public as a way to mitigate damage from deer foraging for food – Rutgers Univ. reference info sent to TS for addition to Environmental Corner - EH reports that a Town Task Force will be established to research deer population control – CG offers to join the Task Force and will represent the WSEC
2. Biking in W. Seneca – TS met with Chris Holmes (W. Seneca Bikes) and Supervisor Dickson on 2/22/21 – issues discussed:
- Consideration of bike transportation when planning road maintenance;
 - Biking connectivity between Town Parks;
 - the need to form a “biking committee”;
 - the need for a WS Bike Master Plan;
 - conferring with Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council to prepare for incorporation of bike lanes when planning for road maintenance in the future.

Adjourned – 8:34 p.m.